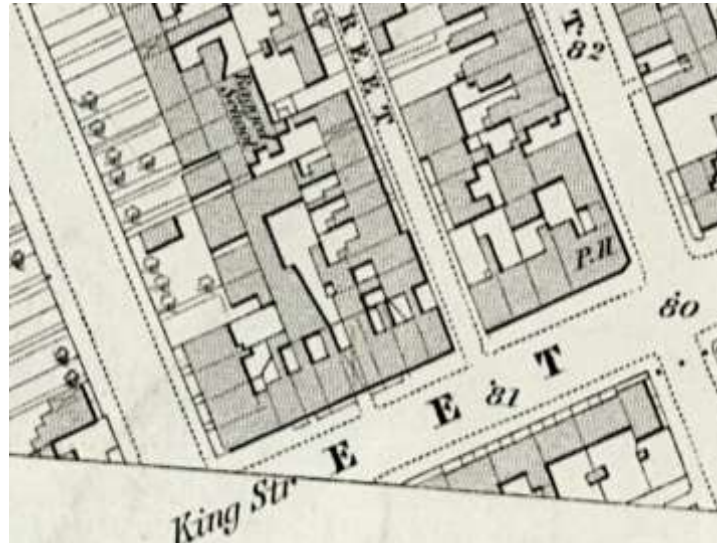


## Education - children

Schools in nineteenth century suburbs started through private support.<sup>1</sup> Camden Town **Ragged School**, for poor children, opened in 1848. The first annual meeting of friends and subscribers was held at the Hanover Square Rooms, W1. The chairman, Lord Ashley, spoke of 'children roaming the streets of the metropolis, who were habitual professional vagrants and who had no calling or pursuit ... forgotten creatures ... unless they were reclaimed and brought within the fold of the gospel, they might hereafter cause wide-spread desolation in the land'.<sup>2</sup> (It was the year after the largest Chartist marches).

The premises, entered from Little Camden Street, near King Street were quite constrained:



Ordnance survey map

In 1849 there were 60 boys, who were taught tailoring and 40 girls, taught needlework. By 1855 the numbers had risen to 410 attending the 'infant and juvenile day schools', 35 boys and 40 girls attending evening school and 24 'boys industrial classes'. Each place was estimated to cost three halfpence a week, or six shillings a year. Of six named sponsors, only one lived directly in Camden Town. At the meeting was recited a nine-verse poem with the title 'Christians of Camden Town, come to the rescue!'<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Margaret Bryant, *The London experience of secondary education*, London 1986.

<sup>2</sup> *Daily News* 18 April 1849.

<sup>3</sup> KALH, Camden Town Ragged School, *Daily News* 18 April 1849; Camden Town Ragged School, 7 June 1855, annual meeting (pamphlet):U840/EL17.

**CAMDEN TOWN RAGGED SCHOOLS,  
LITTLE CAMDEN STREET.**

**Lines**

SUGGESTED BY THE WORDS IN THE REPORT READ AT THE  
ANNUAL MEETING, 7th JUNE, 1855.

"Christians of Camden Town, come to the rescue."

1.

DAY Schools and Sunday Schools,—always at work,—  
Where the worst evils unceasingly lurk;  
Funds are too scanty, and Friends are too few:  
"Christians of Camden Town," come to the view!

2.

Look with compassion, and labor with zeal;  
See for yourselves; for yourselves you must feel:  
Sorrow by Deputy seek not to show;  
"Christians of Camden Town," seeep for the low!

3.

Taught by the Alleys, the Lanes and the Courts,  
Where the "young Avuls" are seen at their sports,  
Ragged and wretched, half starv'd and half clad;  
"Christians of Camden Town," think of the sad!

4.

Open your coffers, and give of your gold,  
Silver and copper ye need not withhold;  
If ye have neither, at least by your prayers,  
"Christians of Camden Town," lighten our cares!

( 2 )

5.

Clabon enlists you, and Blackmore leads on;  
Fix'd is your Canon\* the platform upon,  
Proved well, and pointed well, polished and bright,  
"Christians of Camden Town," use it aright!

6.

This be your spell-word, engaged in the strife,  
War with the Bottle—not war to the knife;  
Thousands beholding on ruin's steep brink,  
"Christians of Camden Town," wear with strong drink!

7.

Start not at danger, and shrink not from loss;  
Show, on your Banner, the Bible and Cross;  
Tell of the Saviour, who died to atone;  
"Christians of Camden Town," make his love known!

8.

Known to the Infidel, known to the Jew,  
Known to the Turk, and the Romanist too;  
And while ye tell it to far distant parts,  
"Christians of Camden Town," known to your hearts!

9.

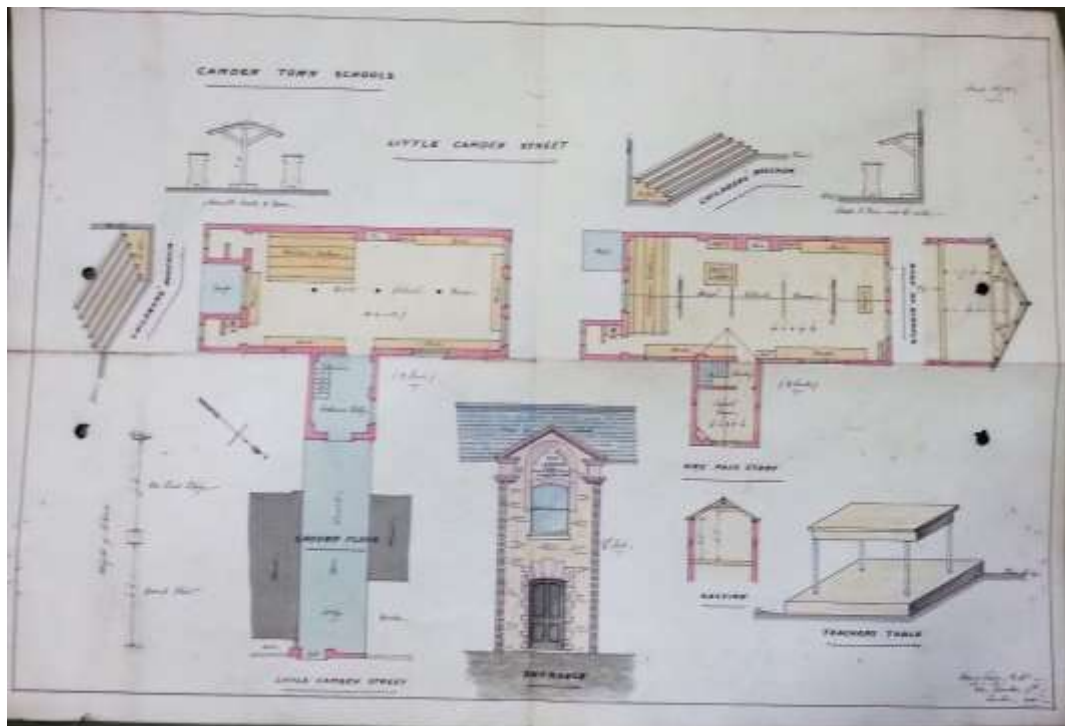
And, when the Earth and the Heavens have fled,—  
When the last Trumpet has waken'd the dead,—  
Rous'd from your graves, by the voice of your Lord,  
"Christians of Camden Town," up for reward!

J. P.

TEMPLE,  
June 7th, 1855.

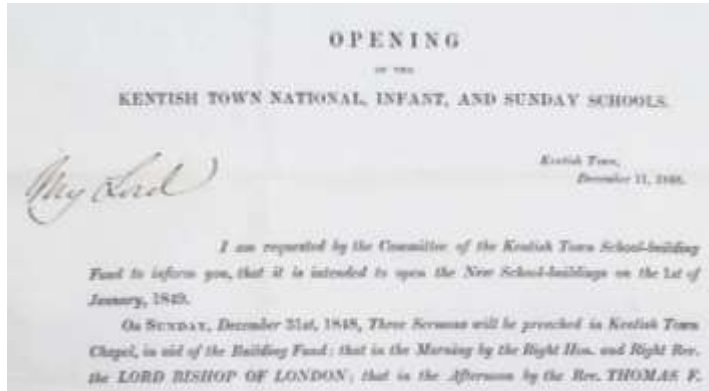
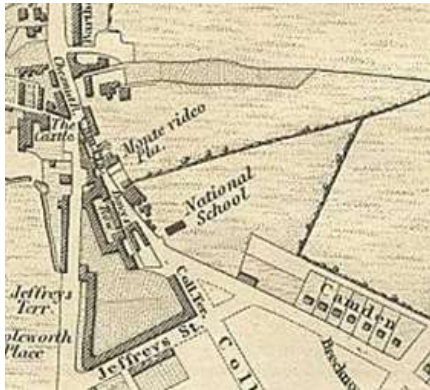
\* The Rev. Canon Dale, the Vicar, who occupied the Chair.

The school was rebuilt within the National Schools system after 1870:



## Camden Town National and Infant Schools,

Thomas Slack built at his own expense at Montevideo Place a National School, with land leased from the Camden Town estate. It moved to Islip Street in Kentish Town in 1848 and the premises were converted to Sussex Laundry.



By contrast with the ragged school, the National and infant schools were much more the concern of Camden Town middle class residents: of the eleven (male) Committee of Management members, all except one lived within Camden Town - four on Rochester Terrace and five in Camden Street, Queens Road and Georgiana Street.<sup>4</sup> Lord Camden, Prebendary Thomas Randolph, William Agar and Rev. Hannam, vicar of St Pancras, were patrons. The schools' daily attendance had grown to 250 pupils and it was 'animadverted' by Her Majesty's Inspectors that more space was needed, particularly a new class-room for girls. The Committee sought funds for building, stating:

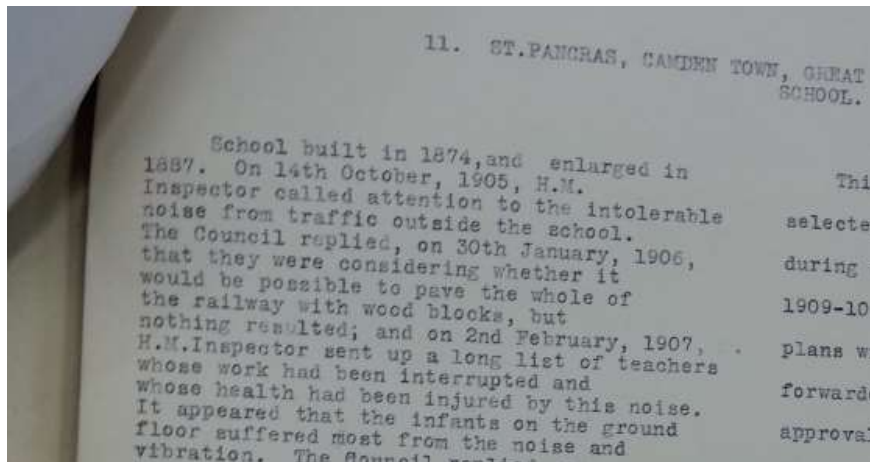
The Committee deem it right to remark, in conclusion, that these Schools are not exclusively confined to the district of St Stephen's in which they are situated, but are open to and largely used by children who reside in other Districts, especially in that of St Paul's, Camden New Town, where no school exists. Upon the Christian sympathy of the District, in particular, the Committee feel that they have some claim. ... The Committee would respectfully but earnestly urge ... a peculiar tie between the two Districts, and giving to the poorer one [from] its richer and far less heavily burdened neighbour.

From 1863 there was a **Middle Class Commercial School**, built on his land by Thomas Lever, at Camden Hall at 230 Camden Street, adjacent to Camden Road. (Although painted out when it became a Baptist church, 1916, the words still show[ed] on the stucco front 'Middle Class Commercial School'.) 1872 it became a National Board School under Mr Milne.<sup>5</sup> The Board acquired Sussex Laundry and erected the first Great College Street Board School.

<sup>4</sup> KALH, Camden Town, national infant schools:U840/EL26.

<sup>5</sup> W C Williams, *A plain English grammar: for the use of the North-London Collegiate School, High Street, Camden Town*, London 1851. Phyllis Willmott, 'Schools for the 'New Middle Class' in Camden, 1850-1890', *Camden History Review* 2000;24:2-5.

But it was noisy, because close to the main road and opposite the 'rookery' 'slum dwellings' opposite of Pain's Place.

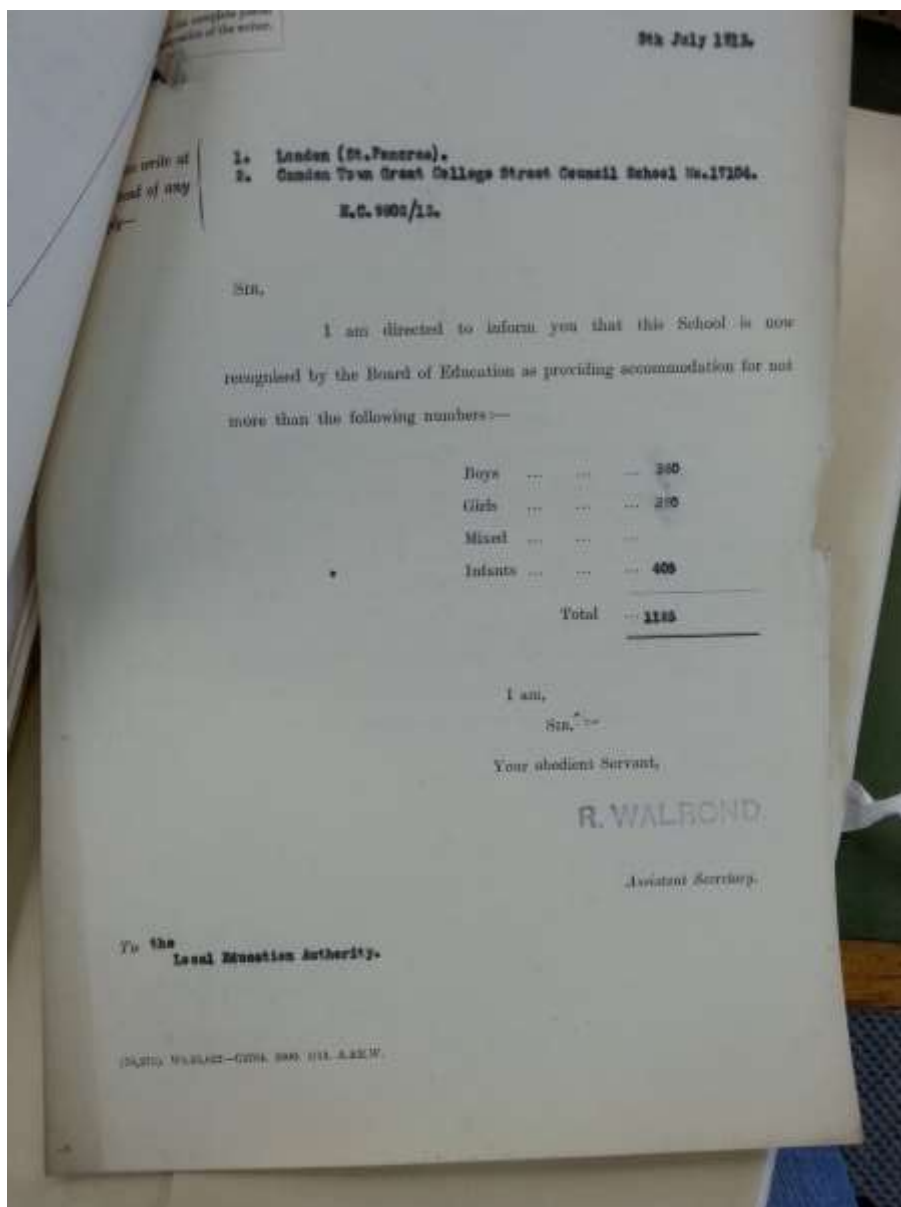


LCC file

The site became part of the road-widening scheme and in June 1888 new wing was added. In 1908 the adjacent Willis organ works building was pulled down, temporary iron school erected. By 1913 the National School was completed at cost of £32788 'the finest LCC School in London'. Edmund Barnes, resident of Camden Square and the first Mayor of St Pancras in 1900, was Chairman of the School.



Site of the new National Board school (Goad fire insurance; LCC file 1912; OS 1953)



In the 1850s, there were several private schools in the larger houses of north Camden Town:

Miss Eliza Stodart at 13 Camden Cottages

Frank Cheshire was running an academy at 8 Camden Terrace in 1859.

The Grosvenors (successively James, Thomas and Robert) ran a boarding and day school at 14 Camden Terrace

Miss Emily Verrells ran a ladies' school 1 Camden Villas (now part of Agar Grove).

Mrs Mary Allen ran a ladies' school at 108 Camden Road Villas (later renumbered 178 Camden Road.)

Miss Todrig at 134 Camden Road in the 1850s.



In the 1870s it was variously a preparatory school run by Miss Sarah Elizabeth Hughes and a kindergarten and preparatory school run by Mrs Graham. It was under what is now Bessemer Court.

By the 1870s, there were a 'Ladies' school at 44 Marquis Road and Tew and McElroy's Ladies' School in South Villas.

**North London Collegiate School** was a school for boys, established at a public meeting in 1850, with the headmaster the Reverend Williams at 6 (later 12) High Street Camden Town (a building previously a piano factory, non-conformist chapel and Anglican church).<sup>6</sup> By 1869 there were 400 pupils (the majority learning classics rather than commerce) with fees of 9 gns a year. But Williams refused sons of 'rising artisans, such as drivers and proprietors of omnibuses'.



North London Collegiate School, 12 Camden High Street, 1868 (at time of the Cobden statue)

1883 North London Collegiate had a 'change of Head Mastership', with Dr CW Williams retiring. The school closed in 1903, with the premises being taken over by Oetzmann's furniture factory.

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<sup>6</sup> Bryant, *secondary education*:188. W C Williams, *A plain English grammar: for the use of the North-London Collegiate School, High Street, Camden Town*, London 1851.

Of greater long-term importance was the **North London Collegiate School for Ladies**, founded by Frances Buss after the same public meeting as the boy's school.<sup>7</sup> Buss had assisted at her mother's school in Kentish Town since 1845. She started the new Collegiate School at 46 Camden Street: by 1865 there were 200 pupils and in 1870 the school moved to premises at 202 Camden Road, where it continued to be highly successful. Meanwhile Buss opened a new Camden School for Girls, 'offering more affordable education' at 12 and 14 Camden Street (Figure 3.5).<sup>8</sup> in 1877 the Collegiate school moved first to Sandal Road, on Camden Road, and then to Edgware, and the School for Girls moved into Sandal Road. Through Buss's particular educational practice, both schools became, and remain, among the top schools in the country.

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<sup>7</sup> Phyllis Willmott. Schools for the 'New Middle Class' in Camden 185-1890, Camden History Review 2000;24-2-45.

<sup>8</sup> Mary Gurney, *Are we to have education for our middle-class girls? or, the History of Camden Collegiate*, London 1872. Nigel Watson, *And their works do follow them: the story of North London Collegiate School 1850-2000*, London 2000. Photographs, the same source.

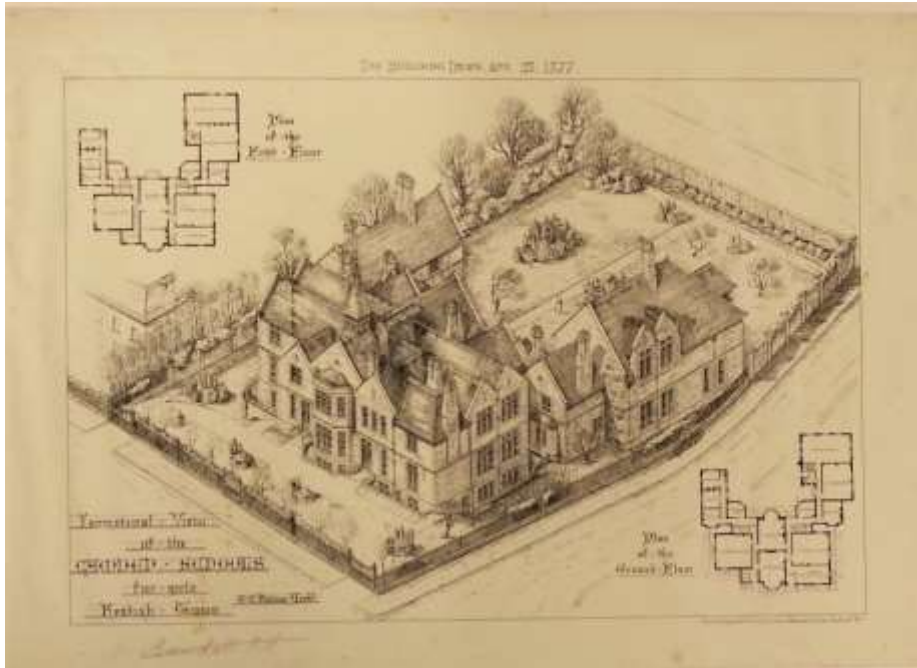


North London Collegiate School for Girls, 46 Camden Street, and pupils



326 Camden Road





Architects Plan for Sandal Road, 1877

**Brecknock School**, built on the former site of the New River Company reservoir was opened in 1881 by the London School Board as an elementary school with special provision for blind and mentally defective children. It was rebuilt in 1929 as a primary and secondary school.

The **Camden Street school** became called after Edward Lyulph Stanley,<sup>9</sup> an educationalist and an uncle of Bertrand Russell who had been vice-chairman London School Board, 1897-1904. Comedian Kenneth Williams attended the school – he was born in Holloway.

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<sup>9</sup> TNA: ED 21/35183



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